

June 20, 2002

MEDICAID PROVIDERS
MONTANA MEDICAID NOTICE

PASSPORT To Health 24-hour Availability

If you are not a patient's PASSPORT provider, and are providing a service that requires PASSPORT approval, you must get approval from the patient's primary care provider. To obtain this approval you must contact the PASSPORT provider. PASSPORT To Health providers are not required to be available to provide referral 24 hours a day.

PASSPORT To Health providers are required to provide 24-hour a day, seven days a week assistance for accessing EMERGENCY medical care. The number to call to get this information is printed on the patient's Medicaid card. This assistance can be in the form of an answering service, a covering provider, or an answering machine that tells the client what to do in case of an emergency.

PASSPORT To Health providers are required to be available for, or arrange suitable coverage for, service, consultation, and referrals during normal office hours. Normal office hours are defined as the hours of operation for all clients. If the office is normally open Monday through Friday, 9:00 am to 5:30 pm, then coverage for consultation and referrals must be provided during that time. If the normal hours of operation are 9:00 am to 2:30 pm, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, then coverage for consultation and referrals must be provided during that time. The provider must make arrangements for coverage if s/he is on vacation or away from the office for any prolonged period of time.

When a patient goes to the Emergency Department for an emergency, no PASSPORT approval is required to evaluate and stabilize the emergency medical condition. For any post-stabilization treatment, PASSPORT authorization is required. During this situation ONLY, if an attempt to reach the provider for approval is made, and no response is received from the primary care provider within 60 minutes, the post-stabilization treatment can be provided without approval. To be paid for this situation, the provider of the service must send the claim with documentation that indicates the time the attempt was made to contact the primary care provider, the time post-stabilization treatment was begun, and an indication that no response was received from the primary care provider. The claim with additional documentation should be sent to:

PASSPORT Program Officer
DPHHS
P.O. Box 202951
Helena MT 59620-2951

If you have any questions or require additional information, please call Provider Relations at:

Helena and out-of-state: (406) 442-1837
In-state toll-free: 1-800-624-3958